

This Old House

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from \$4
p. 28

Backyard Getaways

37 easy upgrades
for patios, decks
and porches

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On the cover



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PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER WILSON

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Pull Off a Better Paint Job



PROJECT OF THE WEEK

HOW TO GIVE WOOD A SUN-BLEACHED LOOK



PHOTO BY K. H.

Wood naturally turns from yellow-brown to gray as the sun and weather slowly age it. But you can speed up that process with a grayed-out treatment that will make your lumber look like well-worn, weathered driftwood.

Start by sanding the piece, if necessary. Wearing protective gloves, apply a sun-bleached wood stain with a foam brush, immediately ragging off any excess stain. Wait 24 hours to allow the stain to dry. Finish off with a few thin coats of spar varnish to protect it from the elements, and let dry for at least 24 hours before placing outside.

You'll find all the tools and supplies necessary for this—and any—home project at The Home Depot nearest you.

For step-by-step instructions, go to thisoldhouse.com/project

Reader mail



OUR APRIL 2016 ISSUE was a hit with readers, who flooded our in-box with praise—we even received our first letter about Reader Mail! Plus, one artistic fan sent us a very special project that we just can't resist sharing.

A reminder to dig safely

There were two columns (Checklist and Weekend Remodel) in the April issue of *This Old House* that should have reminded your readers to call 811. A call must be placed to 811 before you begin any digging project, from simple landscaping to building a deck, so that local utility providers can come to your property and mark off where the utility lines run. Every 8 to 10 miles an underground utility line is damaged because someone dug without calling 811. If you do hit a line, contact the utility company, and if natural gas starts to leak, call 911.

—MORRISON VALE MAIL

Another creative use for TOH

I love reading *This Old House*! I am an economics and studio art double major who loves everything home improvement and DIY. After I look through TOH to get some ideas, I create works for my art classes. Here is my most recent creation (right), a mixed-media piece of the vibrant colors available in your pages. Happy you enjoy!

—LEAH COCHRAN, STUDENT PAINT IN IT

Our TOH reader likes inspiration from our pages to a whole new level by recycling the paper into art pieces. We'll share

Re: Reader Mail

I got a real blast from the past from April's Reader Mail letter about architect John S. Norris, who the writer thanks may be responsible for the plaster molding in [editor] Scott Oreck's home. I have a distant connection with John S. Norris through his daughter, Evelyn M. Norris Stearns. She was married to Edward W. Stearns, a brother of my second great-grandfather. Three years before that, John S. Norris was quite a famous architect who designed buildings in both the South and the Northeast. A number of books have been written about him. Thanks for making my day.

—DAVID RICE, NORFOLK, VA

HOW TO REACH US: E-mail TOH, letters@thisoldhouse.com, includes your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.



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Checklist

JUNE 2015

Easy ways to improve your home right now

6 FAST FIXES

1 **Re-caulk baseboards:** Seal gaps between the wall and trim with caulk to make baseboards easier to dust.



2 **Control weeds:** Use a tarp or weed cloth—even an old tarp at a garage—to help control root systems from the soil systems, such as driveways and lawns.

3 **Overhaul the junk drawer:** Try adding an ice cube tray to keep small items, like paper clips and spare keys, sorted and accessible.

4 **Clear gutters:** Now is an especially good time, since any standing water in them can attract mosquitoes.

5 **Refresh painting tools:** Soak paintbrushes in hot white vinegar. Then wash in warm soapy water. To dry, leave brushes flat, but stand deep rollers upright.

6 **Quiet noisy washing machines:** If your washer at night is loud, the feet may need leveling. There's usually just a rod in the front and unscrewing the front and leveling screws will do it—but consult your manual first.

7 Service lawn mowers

Doing routine maintenance on your lawn mower's underside can make it run smoother and prevent the discharge chute, leaving clumps on your lawn.

Routine cleaning can help stave off future problems, so take time this month to do a checkup. Disconnect the spark plug and remove the blade before dislodging debris with a putty knife and wire brush. Use a hose to spray away any remaining clippings.



8 Make garages safer

In week 4 of National Safety Month, make these key accident-reducing fixes: 10 Store ladders horizontally, not vertically, to avoid toppling and dislodge the ladders from climbing. 11 Secure gasoline, paint thinner, and other chemicals in sealed containers out of direct sunlight. 12 Add reflective tape to garage stairs to increase visibility and prevent tripping.

TOH TIP

9 Plant a night-blooming garden

Get a second look at the clock in your garden by planting flowers that open up between dusk and dawn, taking their cues from light and temperature. Try moonflowers (bees), a fast-growing annual vine featuring large flowers that

come off at night. Four o'clocks, a fragrant perennial, are a good pick too, usually blooming between 4 and 6 P.M.



10 **Install a rain barrel:** With droughts on the rise, setting up a rain barrel is an eco-friendly way to maintain a healthy lawn. Before getting



started, check local laws—some municipalities prohibit rain harvesting, whereas others offer financial incentives. Create the vessel slightly to get the best water pressure—or for large barrels, try an electrical pump—then secure it to the house so it can't tip when full.

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Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information on the next page.

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When diet and the highest tolerated dose of a statin are
not enough, adding PRALUENT could make it PLUNGE.

PRALUENT is different than a statin, and is for adults with uncontrolled LDL (bad) cholesterol who have heart problems due to plaque build-up in the arteries, or who have heart¹

- In clinical studies of patients with heart problems due to plaque in the arteries or with heart¹ who were not at their LDL cholesterol goal despite being on the highest tolerated dose of a statin, adding PRALUENT to a statin reduced high LDL cholesterol an additional **44%-58%**, on average
- So if diet, exercise, and statins haven't been enough to get your LDL cholesterol to where it needs to be, talk to your doctor about adding PRALUENT

PRALUENT is covered by most health insurance and Medicare plans.²

What is PRALUENT (alirocumab)?

PRALUENT is an injectable prescription medicine called a PCSK9 inhibitor. PRALUENT is used along with diet and maximally tolerated statin therapy in adults with heterozygous/familial hypercholesterolemia (an inherited condition that causes high levels of LDL) or atherosclerotic heart problems, who need additional lowering of LDL cholesterol.

The effect of PRALUENT on heart problems such as heart attacks, stroke, or death is not known.

Safety and efficacy in children is unknown.

Important Safety Information for PRALUENT
Do not use PRALUENT if you are allergic to alicumab or to any of the ingredients in PRALUENT.

Before starting PRALUENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including allergies, and if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant or if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed.

Tell your healthcare provider or pharmacist about any prescription and over-the-counter medicines you are taking or plan to take, including natural or herbal remedies.

PRALUENT can cause serious side effects, including allergic reactions that can be severe and require treatment in a hospital. Call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest emergency room right away if

you have any symptoms of an allergic reaction, including a severe rash, redness, severe itching, a swollen face, or trouble breathing.

The most common side effects of PRALUENT include redness, itching, swelling, or pain/tenderness at the injection site, symptoms of the common cold, and flu or flu-like symptoms. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

Talk to your healthcare provider about the right way to prepare and give yourself a PRALUENT injection and follow the "Instructions for Use" that comes with PRALUENT.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.


Praluent®
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¹Heterozygous Familial Hypercholesterolemia

²Formulary data is provided by Managed Markets Insights & Technology (LLC) and is current as of February 2014. Because formulary can change and many health plans offer more than one formulary plan, check directly with the health plan to confirm coverage.

home solutions

INSIDE GARDEN GEAR CURB-APPEAL TIPS CLEANING HACKS CONTAINER IDEA MORE



Pallet with purpose

No need to spend a fortune to bring some order to your garden tools—a salvaged wood shipping pallet does the trick. Ask around at local retailers for pieces that aren't too damaged or discolored for the task, or buy one for less than \$10. Once you've found your pallet, clean it with a brush and a bucket of bleach solution. Then prime and paint in a light, neutral tone—no need for a fancy color—and let it dry. To use, hang your tools, pots, and even potted plants for easy access and a handsome effect. The result is an organized display that really ticks up the charm.

Rx Only

Summary of information about PRALUENT (alvimoprid) (PRALUENT) Injection, for Subcutaneous Injection

What is PRALUENT?

PRALUENT is an injectable prescription medicine called a 5-HT₃ inhibitor. PRALUENT is used along with diet and maximally tolerated stimulant therapy in adults with idiopathic (familial hyperaldosteronism) (an inherited condition that causes high levels of LDL or "bad" cholesterol) heart problems who need additional lowering of LDL cholesterol. The effect of PRALUENT on heart problems, such as heart attacks, stroke, or death is not known. It is not known if PRALUENT is safe and effective in children.

Who should not use PRALUENT?

Do not use PRALUENT if you are allergic to alvimoprid or to any of the ingredients in PRALUENT. See the end of this Summary of Information for a complete list of ingredients in PRALUENT.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using PRALUENT?

Before you start using PRALUENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including allergies and if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if PRALUENT will harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking PRALUENT.

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. You and your healthcare provider should decide if you will take PRALUENT or breastfeed. You should not do both without talking to your healthcare provider first.

Tell your healthcare provider or pharmacist about any prescription and over-the-counter medicines you are taking or plan to take, including herbal or natural remedies.

How should I use PRALUENT?

- See the detailed "Instructions for Use" that comes with Praluent about the right way to prepare and give your PRALUENT injections.
- Use PRALUENT exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to use it.
- PRALUENT comes as a single-dose (1 time) pre-filled pen (autoinjector), or as a single-dose pre-filled syringe. Your healthcare provider will prescribe the type and dose that is best for you.
- If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give the injections of PRALUENT, you or your caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and administer PRALUENT. Do not try to inject PRALUENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider or nurse.
- PRALUENT is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous) 1 time every 2 weeks.
- Do not inject PRALUENT together with other injectable medicines at the same injection site.
- Always check the label at your pen or syringe to make sure you have the correct medicine and the correct dose of PRALUENT before each injection.
- If you forget to use PRALUENT or are not able to take the dose at your regular time, inject your missed dose as soon as you remember, within 1 dose of your missed dose. Then take your next dose 2 weeks from the day you missed your dose. This will put you back on your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 1 day, wait until your next scheduled dose to restart PRALUENT. This will keep you on your original schedule. If you are not sure when to restart PRALUENT, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- If you use more PRALUENT than you should, talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Do not stop using PRALUENT without talking with your healthcare provider. If you stop using PRALUENT, your cholesterol levels can increase.

What are the possible side effects of PRALUENT?

PRALUENT can cause serious side effects, including:

- **allergic reactions.** PRALUENT may cause allergic reactions that can be severe and require treatment in a hospital. Call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away if you have any symptoms of an allergic reaction including a swollen face, mouth, throat, or tongue; difficulty breathing; or hives (bumps).

The most common side effects of PRALUENT include: indigestion, constipation, or pain/tenderness at the injection site; symptoms of the common cold; and flu or flu-like symptoms.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

There are not all of the possible side effects of PRALUENT. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information. Ask your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

General information about the safe and effective use of PRALUENT

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use PRALUENT for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give PRALUENT to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This is a summary of the most important information about PRALUENT. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for information about PRALUENT that is written for health professionals. For more information about PRALUENT, go to www.PRALUENT.com or call 1-866-PRALUENT (1-866-778-0526).

What are the ingredients in PRALUENT?

- Active ingredient: alvimoprid
- Inactive ingredients: hydrochloride, polyacrylate 20, sucrose, and water for injection

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Revised: October 2016

ALP/PSL-OCT-15

The 411 on hose buying

Washing the dog, watering the plants—no one hose can handle every task. Below: The three types every homeowner should have —SAL VAGLIA

For general use

Velvet hoses are affordable—good thing, as they're prone to kinking and splitting. Durable **rubber garden hoses** with brass fittings won't do either of those, and can last for 5 to 10 years. Heavy-duty profiles help water to grip too.

For irrigating beds

A **flat saucer hose** is easiest to contour around plants; one made from polyester-covered PVC, laid flat and labeled for use around edibles, works well in vegetable gardens. Just introduced: the first food-grade polypropylene-saucer hose, made from FDA-approved resin. www.westinghouse.com

A **round saucer hose** made from recycled vinyl can withstand the elements without drying and cracking like recycled rubber often does—meaning you can save it buried below mulch to irrigate ornamental plants year-round.

For watering containers

On patios and decks, where space is tight, a **coil-coiling hose** stores easily. Choose one made from food-grade polyurethane, impervious to oils—and you'll can safely drink from it!

Green 56-foot garden hose: \$19; garden.com. 25-foot saucer hose: \$14; weston.com. 50-foot saucer hose: \$24; garden.com. Coil hose: \$30; weston.com.



Realtors' best curb-appeal tips

Impress your friends (and especially your neighbors) with these quick fixes for the outside of your home. We asked Tom Salomone, president of the National Association of Realtors, for his top tricks to make a house look ready to sell—even if you're there to stay.

Install lighting. Most people have lights over the garage, and at the front door, but Salomone's favorite place to add bright lights is along walkways leading up to the house. "Low lighting on either side of the path makes it feel like a red carpet," he says.

Freshen the color. Start by repainting the front door. Salomone takes a neutral color for walls, but a bright red or yellow is a great option for those stopping at the door. And don't stop there: Pillowcases with furniture or container gardens, which are even more effective if your yard's light on landscaping.

Fix the dents. Dents in the garage door can make it look years older than it is, so fresh coat of paint can help mask the wear and tear. Look for bent gutters, too, paying special attention to eaves and overhangs.

Don't forget the driveway. "People often wash their siding, but if they're pulling their car into the garage every night and going right inside, the driveway gets taken for granted." So leave no sign. Tidy up the driveway and any front sidewalk—or resurfacing them, if you like—gives the entire property a brighter look.

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Garage workshop for \$371

Revamped cabinetry and a tricked-out pegboard transform a storage nightmare into a DIYer's dream.



ADVICE The garage was a nuisance, and the cluttered worksheds were a nuisance.

AFTER Creating a functional space for home-improvement projects and supplies helped kick-start the rest of the home's renovations.

SOMETIMES you have to upgrade your workspace before you can overhaul your living space. Just ask decorated interior Julie Grayson, who during a whole-house renovation, decided a lounge was enough to let her ease to writing in the garage of her \$279 house in Rochester 22826, Michigan. So she cleared the clutter, threw out the old and the all-stained floor, built a ramp to create a concrete gray garage floor. After painting the walls white and adding Julia and her fiancé, Matt Burns, turned their attention to the outside with a new deck. The couple rediscovered its housing, then added plywood doors to hide their closets and project materials, strategically placed other trees and benches give the house a new look while allowing large trees to sit comfortably inside the backyards. They replaced the wood counter with white MDF and portable board painted with chalkboard paint—perfect for sketching out designs and measuring items. Matt, green (and) painted, he is a carpenter (see) too. For this thoughtful touch, Julia rewarded house owner's support to create two industrial-style scones. Now Julia, who blogs for *style me*, is in a more aesthetic from ever before home-improvement projects. "Sometimes the hardest part is finding that last one percent," she says, "and having things stand the test of time is how I feel it can come that little bit." —KATIE KIRBY



THE PROJECT TALLY

Depressed the floors with an industrial strength cleaner from its home center, they refinished them with garage floor paint mixed with a wood-grain additive. **\$50**

Added extra support to the framing of the existing workstation with 2x4s and 2x6s, then added doors made from MDF and lamination, and a countertop cut from MDF layered over particleboard. **\$164**

Painted the walls and cabinets, and finished the counters with chalkboard paint. **—RSC**

Hung finished
it by 3 feet parchment
painted with light green
blossoms and added
hooks and shelves
for storage. **\$184**

Made scones from brackets, cord bits, and rebar shades, and built cages all from the home order. **343**

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DECK RAIL TRIM SIDING MOULDING PORCH PAVERS

before + after:
kitchen design



Fit for a crowd

Two serious cooks with a pint-size workspace order up a redo that's one part period style, one part party central
BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEXANDER

EMPTY NESTERS KNOW what they want, and Chuck Hansen and Alison Randolph, parents of two 20-somethings, are no different. "The whole family likes to cook, and the opportunity to entertain," says Chuck, of the need to rework the cramped kitchen in their Seattle Tudor Revival. So yes, they asked for a pro-style range and a more open, free-flowing layout that would create prep and gathering space. JAS Design Build worked with the couple to provide for storage and signage needs, without tearing

down walls. "Now every inch counts," says designer Kim Clements, who was mindful of the couple's expertise as physical therapists in designing a compact, ergonomic workspace for two—or more. She chose lower upper cabinets, widened a passageway, and added a Dutch door to create light. Elle d'habitat and chopping games. New windows are trimmed to match the home's original 1920s woodwork, and finishes have a warm, period feel. Says Chuck about the new high-functioning space, "It goes as good as every day."



repairs. The small dated window area was not conducive to teamwork or mingling.

AFTER Randolph, refreshed and more open to the backyard and dining room, the kitchen is now a high-functioning entertaining magnet.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANE STOUT; HOUSE: JAS DESIGN BUILD

An apron sink pays royal tribute to convenience and cottage style. Fewer upper cabinets means a more open feel, and more room for art. Sink: Pearl Faucet; Kohler; Stove: Circle Sawhorse; Dish:



Round marble countertops, clear cabinet doors, perforated metal cabinet fronts, and dark hardware contribute to the timeless look. Paint: Farrow & Ball; Lamp: Revere Gray; Pots: Kneeland; Towels: Reproduction; Tile: Antidote

ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN \$10,000
Share your kitchen or bath with us. Search for America's Best Remodeled Contest for a chance to win a \$10,000 Delta prize package and appear in our October issue. Visit RealEstate.com/yourTale sponsored by DELTA

The new Dutch door and windows, where a divided light lets in more light with lead tape, add to original heated-glass windows in the dining room. Windows: Marvin



An open shelf and horizontal V grooves pointing into the dining room and the cooking zone. With hanging cabinets help conserve precious space. Pendant: Quatrefoil; Floral table: D. Meyer



homeowner tip CHUCK HINSON, SEATTLE
To maximize storage and reinforce the kitchen's cottage style, we added an open shelf with brackets that wraps the eating nook and cooking space."

before

A rounded peninsula delineated the designated workspace.



after

By jiggering the layout and opening it up, the same-size kitchen more function and a roomier feel.

1. To planed all cabinets with a space saving technique to serve the relocated eating nook.

2. Added a small island on wheels that can be moved around as needed.

3. Attached cabinets lead to the new bridge spot, leaving wall space elsewhere.



4. Moved the cleanup zone to the dining room, leaving a row of base cabinets.

5. Ditched the peninsula and relocated the range to the old sink wall, with a new island where a window had been.

6. Removed a swinging door and replaced it with a slightly wider one.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIMMY

The custom island rolls aside to open up the room for gatherings. The hardware evokes a time before grocery lists were kept on phones. Source: Reproduction



Brackets now frame the opening to the dining room to suggest an arch, echoing original arched openings in the house. Rings: Vang

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before + after:
bath design

Serene shower space

Rejiggering fixture placement—and ditching a massive, little-used tub—allow for a fully functional and updated master bath

BY MICHELLE BRUNNER + PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRIA GIOVANI

FOR SOME homeowners, a relaxing soak in the tub is the perfect end to a day—but not for Lynn and Joe Karaszch. Self-described “shower people,” they hated the layout of the master bath in their 1973 Colonial in Wayne, New Jersey. An overcast, ponded tub hogged space, crowding the shower and single sink. In addition, a large arched window and skylight let in too much light and heat for them to comfortably get ready in the A.M. To the rescue: interior designer Jennifer Worland McDermott, who flip-flopped the fixtures to fit the couple's needs. Out came the tub with its huge arched window, in its place went a twin-sink vanity with a wide expanse of mirror above it. A scratchable-brass window was installed at the end of the sink wall, and a spacious shower with a bench opposite it. A soothing neutral palette and an interesting mix of tile and stone gave the space a serene, updated look. “I can’t believe it’s the same room,” says Lynn. “Before, so much space was wasted—now we actually use all of our bath!”

BEFORE: An overcast, rarely-used spa tub and the massive arched window above it dominated the space

AFTER: Losing the tub (and its huge window) made way for a scratchable-topped dual-sink vanity. A generous shower now occupies the opposite wall. Hardly-Reduction Hardware Stores, Wayne



BEFORE





homeowner tip

LOVE EXCESS? NONE. BY "Stopping the shower wall short and topping it with glass, you're creating an open feel in the space."



By stopping the shower wall short and topping it with glass, you're creating an open feel in the space.



White paint and 3x4s give the portion of the wall below the vaulted ceiling a traditional look, while stainless-steel doors and chrome knobs keep the space light and airy. Painted Shells of Light Photo Restoration Hardware

The 12-by-24-inch gray ceramic tile with subtle half-length lines for stone patterns is the floor. Shower and Bathtub Photo



after

The footprint stayed the same, but losing the tub allowed for a double vanity in its place and a generously sized shower opposite it.

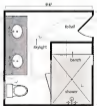
before

The master bath had a large tub that crowded the shower and left little sink space.



1. Replaced the tub and the adjacent window over it with a double vanity and a large wall-mount mirror.

2. Relocated the toilet to where the shower stall hardware added a double-hung window above it.



3. Increased the shower area by moving the shower door, changing the location of the vanity.

4. Put in a 5-by-4-foot shower with a bench seat where the single sink vanity and toilet hardware.



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More saving. More doing:



Roll-on pattern

Picture a cylindrical rubber stamp inked with paint—and how quickly it could jazz up your space. BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREW MAGUIR

WHEN A BOOKCASE is as bland as a blank canvas, it's tempting to goise its back wall. To make up this built-in, we removed the shelves, added a base coat of matte white latex, and used a color-roller design roller, in a pattern called Quilt, to put down feathers in a seamless fourth one vertical row after another—like wallpaper. The tool we used, below, includes a foam roller, which you run through paint before angping in the design roller. The foam roller holds enough paint for three long rows; to remove any excess before starting the first row, we ran the design roller over paper. (Find a step-by-step, with a tip on how to align the rows, at diydw.com/controlled-patterns/.) The roller creates a natural frame on all sides; to avoid this, run a roll of pattern on wallpaper paper and paste it in place. But since we'd arranged a few of our favorite things, all we could see was our built-in's truly new look. ■

The foam roller picks up paint, and the design roller holds it in exactly pattern down (\$45, [roller.com](http://www.roller.com)).



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Good enough to eat

New ornamental varieties of edible plants make the idea of mixing fruits, vegetables, and herbs into garden beds and borders more appealing than ever. BY SAI VADIGA

MAYBE YOU'VE passed at the blueberry bushes on display at your local nursery, only to walk on by, thinking they might not provide the biggest pop of color to your yard. Growing your own summer fruit is easy, of course, but what about the rest of the year? Happy, plant breeders have been hard at work addressing just that issue. The result: new cultivars of classic edible plants that offer several seasons of interest by way of more ornamental foliage, spring flowers, fall color, or even bright stems in winter.

But don't think these plants' edible bounty is getting short shrift. Breeders usually start by focusing on better fruiting traits, like producing sweeter berries or a plant that self-pollinates, then work on carving up the color. Most of these plants require full sun and an annual top dressing of compost or a slow-release organic fertilizer for maximum fruit production. Some need acidic soil, which is exact to maintain in a container. Bonus: Many of these plants draw both ornamental and edible interest to your yard, too.

Turn the page for a few new cultivars, along with older ones deserving a fresh look, that promise colorful flowers and foliage to go along with all that pleasing plucking.



Spring & White



Summer Fruit



Fall foliage

Three seasons of interest

The blueberry bushes that arrive in mid-summer are just the second set for Woodbrook Farm Inc. In spring, the new foliage emerges pink and blue, followed by their deepest reds in fall after fruiting. Leaves turn brilliant blue

Perfect for pots

Set containers of these colorful plants on a deck or patio to enjoy up close.

1. DWARF MEYER LEMON (*Citrus meyer*) Improved Meyer? Smaller and more disease resistant than the market staple, this lemon hybrid has glossy evergreen foliage and white, citrus-scented flowers in spring, followed by fruit. These succulent lemons bloom in summer. In cold climates it does well indoors. Joy in sunny window. Grows up to 3 feet high and wide in Zones 9–10.

2. GARDEN STRAWBERRY (*Fragaria ananassa*) Trademark? A strawberry that rarely develops runners. Tristar is just big. It flowers magenta-pink on dark green stems; deep, dark green leaves turned to light green. Fragrant berries appear in early summer and continue all season. Grows up to 1 foot high and 2 feet wide in Zones 4–8.

3. ORNAMENTAL BLUEBERRY (*Vaccinium corymbosum* x *Jelly Blue*) In spring, self-pollinating Jelly Blue is followed by bright green without white flowers develop; deep red berries in early to mid-summer. Fall brings shrubs ahead to the leaves. Grows up to 2 feet high and 2 feet wide in Zones 4–8.



Ground huggers

Place these low growers near a back door for quick access.

4. LIMB CHERRY (*Prairienut* x *cherry*) The fruit of this creeping evergreen shrub is often used to make preserves or sauces. In late spring and early summer, white to dark pink bell-shaped flowers appear in bunches, followed by the bright red fruit. Grows up to 10 inches high and 2 feet wide in Zones 2–6.

5. TRICOLOR SAGE (*Salvia officinalis* 'Tricolor') While most of the herbs within this classic species flower purple with light green leaves, the foliage of Tricolor also includes white variegation and touches of purple, mostly in mid-summer, followed by spikes of lavender blue flowers. Grows up to 18 inches high and wide in Zones 8–9.

6. COMMON THYME (*Thymus vulgaris*) This species and its cultivars includes some of the best culinary versions of this easy to grow perennial. In late spring, the woody mass of gray-green aromatic leaves fills with small, light purple flowers that attract bees. Grows up to 1 foot high and 18 inches wide in Zones 4–9.

Hedging bets

Plant these shrubs at the back of a bed for structure, or line them up in a row for seasonal screening.

7. DWARF POMEGRANATE (*Punica granatum* var. *nana*) Never stays significantly smaller than the spectacular standard, making for a manageable hedge filled with glossy green foliage and empty, red trumpet-shaped flowers in July and August. Afterward, 2-inch long seed-filled fruits replace the blooms. Grows up to 3 feet high and wide in Zones 7–10.

8. ORNAMENTAL BLUEBERRY (*Vaccinium corymbosum* x *Peppercup*) Self-pollinating Peppercup's fruit buds in the same year. A wave of bell-shaped white flowers appearing in April is followed by the sweet berries, and the cyclotours in late June. The foliage turns a deep purplish red in the fall, before any of that season's new wood goes bright yellow and red in winter. Grows up to 5 feet high and wide in Zones 4–8.

9. DWARF CHAMBERBERRY BUSH (*Viburnum trilobum* 'Compactum') In spring and early summer, white lacecap flowers bloom, followed by clusters of tart red fruit used for relish. The maple-like foliage of Compactum tolerates partial shade and turns crimson in fall. Grows up to 6 feet high and wide in Zones 3–7.

10. SWEET BAY (*Laurus nobilis* 'Golden Sunburst') Traditional bay laurels work well as a permanent evergreen, but Sicilian Sunburst is a twist apart with bright gold or chartreuse foliage attached to mid-stems. Once dried, the fragrant, clear essential leaves add Mediterranean and flower to soups, stews, and roasts. Grows up to 20 feet high and wide in Zones 8–10. ■



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DELTA

Giving a boxy Colonial charm

A reworked entry porch adds curb appeal and character to a no-frills facade

BY MICHELLE REISNER • ILLUSTRATION BY DEBRA KATE INC.



BEFORE



Operable shutters mounted over the window openings help prevent exposed feet

"WHAT CAN I DO to make my house less boring? It looks so cookie-cutter," says Amy Hyman, who lives in this 1960s Colonial in Akron, Ohio, with her husband, Mike, and their two kids. So we turned to Cleveland-area architect Rebecca Parnaso for ideas.

The biggest challenge: "The garage is more prominent than the front door," says Parnaso. Adding a gabled portico and narrowing the garage profile with a shallow porch gives the house more harmonious proportions and draws attention away from the garage. To add character, Parnaso suggests classic old-house touches, such as larger divided-light windows and raised-panel shutters. An inviting, colorful front door with sidelights and a new garage door help boost street presence.

"What a difference these changes make!" says Amy. "The first thing we're going to do is tackle the front porch." ■

finishing touches

A playful palette and timeless accents go a long way in creating up a Colonial.



paint

Icebox with hints of charcoal gives the house a fresh look. Sidelight highlights the entrance. Sherwin Williams's Quartertone Foggy Day and Pure Red. \$50/gal. gallon



sconce

Not only do these carriage-style sconces bring subtle charm to the facade, they also hide the large garage door. Lower: \$100



shutter

Painted wood raised-panel shutters are an elegant upgrade that suits the style of the house. Shade result, from \$124 per pair



window

Shaded double-hung lights give this aluminum-clad wood double-hung model enduring appeal. Merve: from \$280

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Provence-inspired patio

South-of-France flair meets casual West Coast style in this open-air dining room that's equal parts elegant and easygoing

BY MICHELLE BRUNNER ■ PHOTOGRAPH BY ALIC HEMER

TWINKLING LIGHTS overhead: The crunch of gravel underfoot. Olive trees on all sides. This idyllic scene, at interior designer Jane Mazzoni Caproni's Sonoma Valley farmhouse, showcases French country style—but through a distinctly low-key California lens. Call it “pared-down Provence,” with clean-lined rather than carved wood furniture, plain linens in place of prints, and simple dishware instead of scalloped. A custom pergola gives the outdoor room its structure, with a canopy of flowering vines to refer to lines. The antique pine table and all-weather wicker chairs offer an invitation to sit and sip. And for when those leisurely meals extend into the night, string lights lend an atmospheric glow, while no concrete pendant provides additional light—and a handsome graphic accent—to the romantic space. Five ways to make your own patio this picturesque, read on.

ceramic pitcher

A ribbed profile gives this pitcher the charming look of hand-thrown pottery. Its size is ideal for water or iced tea, and it's perfect for holding fresh blooms from the garden. *Simple Curve 24-quart pitcher, \$240; bedfordcottageandco.com*



pedestal table

The hammered steelcher weather of pine table, an antique-style find, is the perfect in-equal mood. This one, with simple turned pedestal base and a white-washed finish, is a good match in a nice price. *\$283; joell.com*



flowering vine

American elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) is reminiscent of wisteria in flowering, and makes for flowering vines that climb quickly. Asian varieties, which can be a nuisance, are not recommended. For more specific advice, consult your local nursery. *\$10 to \$20 per plant; local nurseries*



hanging lantern

The outdoor pendant has simple lines and proportions similar to the homeowner's lanterns, but it's a more formal piece for a dining room. *Black lantern, \$149; home-decorations.com*



accent pillows

These pillows add color and texture to the outdoor dining room. *Striped pillows, two for \$53; wayfair.com. Solid pillows, \$30; pier1.com. Throw, \$30; target.com*

glow lights

Stringing lights from the pergola's eaves toward its center is a quick way to add ambience and soft, warm light. *\$20 to \$30; amazon.com*



wicker chair

This water-friendly, handwoven rattan and bamboo chair is stackable—a boon for off-season storage. A nod to Rustic Charm's Perimeter's Tuscan-style wicker. *Gray melange wicker chair, \$149; allmodern.com*



serving tray

Made of acacia wood, this tray is built in handles and sturdy construction make it ideal for serving food and wine. *\$20; target.com*

Instant charmer

The show follows along as a couple's quest for quality leads them to a factory-built house by JILL CONOVER

BILL AND APRIL HARRIS used to escape their cramped condo in the city by going for hikes or walks along the beach on Boston's North Shore. It was on one of those forays three years ago that they fell for a four-acre wooded property for sale just outside the coast of Essex, Massachusetts.

"We loved the mature trees, the privacy, everything—so we jumped at the chance," recalls Bill.

They'd need to build a house, of course. Problem was, says April, "We were turned off by the lack of character of most new houses." Then one day they found their dream house in a very unexpected place: a catalog. "I did an online search for 'Greek Revival farmhouse' and found a house that looked so good, we couldn't believe it wasn't old," she says.

The farmhouse was actually Federal style, a model built by Cooney Homes in its factory in Middlebury, Vermont. Cooney's approach to production called for precision. Highly detailed shop drawings guide the precise measuring and cutting of nearly all the wood—from floor joists to rafters—read craftsmen, build doors, windows, cabin staircases, and wall sections with all the window and door openings in place. Then all the parts are labeled, banded, and trucked to the site to be assembled in a specific order by a local builder.



WISDOM METHODS, CLASSIC DETAILS
Contractor Erik Kinnick's crew built a fully outfitted site in the event of the garage, where it will be expanded to admit guest suites.

AFTER The factory-built farmhouse that Cooney Homes built near Middlebury, Vt., for a client in Essex, Mass., is the first model Cooney Homes is building.



AFTER

Precision process

The secret? A mix of old-world craftsmanship and industrial cutting machines



FACTORY DIRECT

1. Workers and administrators in a modern manufacturing facility explore making any window. "Even with the high technology that we employ," says Cooney Homes president Mike Cooney, "it's so comforting to know that occasionally 17th-century technology trumps 21st-century technology."

2. A cupola similar to the one on the house sits on the Cooney Homes factory floor, ready to be shipped and transported to Kiplandia.

3. From left, TCM TV host Kevin O'Connor and TCM TV general manager Tom Slinehart with Cooney during a tour of the 125,000-square-foot factory in Vermont.

4. House parts are wrapped, stacked, and labeled before being trucked to the job site in several batches, depending on the size of the house—say, a living package and a brick package with interior trim.

JUST ADD NAILS

5. On-site, a farmer connects two wall panels that form part of the rear gable and an attached garage. Cooney Homes uses industrial machinery to cut parts to within 1/16th of an inch.

6. Contractor Erik Kinnick explains that preproduction cuts bring time on-site.

7. Wall panels arrive with openings for windows and doors already in place, a key factor in the efficiency of production.



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Hounds and grounds

How to put together a dog-friendly landscape plan

BY MARY HUAN • ILLUSTRATION BY TOMIUM

FROM DIGGING to doing his business, your dog's habits can wreak havoc on your yard. And your need for a well-kept yard bed could literally make him sick. Forget landscaping—it's time to dogscape.

Tougher turf Dog urine contains nitrogen, and as with fertilizers, too high a concentration can burn and even kill your lawn. To withstand the onslaught, use soft water-resistant grasses, such as fescue or ryegrass. Better yet, create a mulched pot-ripped area bordered by shrubs and enclosed with a boulder or lawn ornament. Take your dog there to squat, and reward him with treats. Repeat. Old dogs can, in fact, learn, but it may take as long as a few months.

Neurotic plantings Dogs do not have an innate sense of what's safe to eat, and many popular flowers and shrubs, including daffodils, ivy, and hydrangeas, are toxic to them. So before planting, go to aspc.org and search "poison" for a list of potentially harmful landscape plants. When picking a mulch, avoid cocoa hulls, which can contain theobromine, the chemical that makes chocolate toxic to dogs. Bark and chip mulches can also obstruct a pooch's airway.

Stuff-bowling In areas where dogs play, choose hardy plants that they can rough up and run through, advises Karen Ursula Edmondson, a landscaper in West Hill, New York. She likes ornamental grasses. "They have a massive root system that can't be rambling or digging dogs will have a hard time bowling," she says.



For groundcover, try perennials such as 'Ellie' thyme, wildflowers, or clovers. Avoid pea gravel, which can get stuck between paw pads. For edging, use smooth, round stones or low-to-the-ground dwarf shrubs. Stay away from metal edging and sharp gravel, which can cut paws.

Dog-safe fertilizers Don't assume organic formulas are better. They often contain animal products such as bone, blood, or fish meal. Yuck—except that it's delish to dogs, and can make them sick. When using synthetic fertilizers, water deeply after applying, and keep dogs off lawns or beds for a day or two. Tip: Don't fertilize front and back yards at the same time, so there's always a safe patch available. Side note, try compost or—seriously—organic fertilizers.

Chem-free herbicides and pesticides

Exposure to traditional pest and weed controls can cause temporary trouble—and over the long term, even cancer. The safest options are natural insecticidal soaps, biological pesticides, and herbicides made from certain essential oils (such as mint or clove, always diluted). Edmondson also recommends an extract from a tropical tree known as neem. Her formula: "Mix a cupful with a gallon of water, add a quart of Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day Soap, and you'll have a terrific application to fight fungal diseases on ornamentals and fruit trees." And forget about weed and slug baits. Both contain paraquat, which can be fatal to dogs. A note, ASPCA-approved alternatives? A bit of beer as a slug deterrent. Put it out at dusk, and leave it out just overnight. ■

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READ THIS BEFORE YOU BUY DUCTLESS AC

These quick-to-retrofit cooling systems provide unrivaled operating efficiency and room-by-room zoning comfort. BY THOMAS BAKER

All air-conditioning uses the same outdoor components to produce the cold refrigerant that cools the air inside a home. The difference with ductless (see sidebar) is where that air is cooled and how it is distributed.

Central air systems send refrigerant to a bulky central air handler that then blows cooler air into the house through a network of ducts. Ductless systems pump refrigerant to compact indoor units within individual rooms. Each unit operates like a miniature air handler, delivering cooler air into its own zone only when it's needed.

Because there are no ducts, these systems don't have the air leaks, heat gains, or pressure imbalances that can undermine the efficiency and comfort of a central air setup. And installation is a snap. It's far easier and faster to fish a narrow bundle of installed refrigerant lines through a house than to retrofit bulky HVAC ducts.

AC SYSTEMS COMPARED



What to know

► **Cost** A single zone system with one indoor unit starts around \$3,000 including installation. A four-zone system costs about \$12,000 installed.

► **Installation** You'll need a professional for indoor and outdoor units and connect the 3/8-inch-wide bundle of refrigerant lines and electric cables.

► **Maintenance** The filter on each indoor unit should be removed and cleaned every month. Once a year, have a technician check refrigerant pressure and flush condensate lines.

► **Noise** Indoor units have whisper-quiet squirrel-cage fans driving 14-gpm-16-oz. makers. Decibel ratings run at about 25, roughly the same as rustling leaves.

► **Warranties** Coverage averages from 5 to 12 years, but you can expect the sort of no-charge equipment to last 15 to 20 years before it needs to be replaced.

SIZE MATTERS

Beware of installers who size a system using a rule-of-thumb estimate. More often than not, the result is over-size equipment that's costly to operate and can't effectively reduce humidity levels. Instead, insist on a "Manual J" heat-load calculation. It figures system size based on north and factors such as climate, insulation levels, and sun exposure.

CHOOSE YOUR INDOOR UNIT

There are four basic types of devices for cooling air. Choose the one that suits the room, and put it in a spot where you can easily change the filter.



WALL MOUNTED The easiest to install and least expensive of the group. It's also the most common type. Best for cooling single rooms. Mounted 6 inches at the bottom of the unit control direction of airflow. Operates at 26 decibels (dB). Shown: Daikin, us.daikin.com



FLOOR MOUNTED Robinson or near the floor, this type directs air toward the ceiling. It's the easiest unit to maintain, due to its location. (Some units can also be suspended from the ceiling.) Operates at about 35 dB. Shown: Dimplex, dimplex.com



CEILING RECESSED Sends air in four directions at the same time, making it a good choice for large open-floor plans. Also called a cassette, it requires any 12-inch of clearance above the ceiling. Operates at about 35 dB. Shown: Lennox, lennox.com

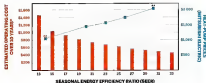


CONCEALED This least obtrusive system sits above a soffit or ceiling and looks up to different rooms through as much as 12 feet of hidden ducts; you can't see the grille. The unit must be accessible for servicing. Operates at about 30 dB. Shown: Mitsubishi Electric, us.mitsubishi.com

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAIKIN; ILLUSTRATION: JEFFREY M. HARRIS

Efficiency vs. system cost

Air conditioning systems carry a Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) rating, which compares cooling capacity with the amount of electricity used over the course of a typical cooling season. Rating your ductless system ranges from 13 to 33 SEER. As the graph below shows, the higher the rating, the more you'll pay for your system, and the lower your electricity bills will be come summer. To see what effect SEER ratings have on extended operating costs, go to the central AC life-cycle cost calculator at energy.gov. System prices come from ahwheat.com.



WHAT'S A TON?

In the parlance of air conditioning, a ton is not a measure of weight; it's a measure of cooling capacity. One ton of cooling extracts 12,000 Btu per hour from a space. That's enough heat to melt 1 ton of ice within 24 hours, hence the connection between weight and comfort. The capacity of ductless systems ranges from 1½ to 4 tons.

SEE IT INSTALLED
For more photos, see a ductless system gone in: vixid.hvacknow.com/ductless-AC

Better air quality

All indoor units include mesh filters that collect dust. But some, such as Mitsubishi Electric's, also offer filters treated with enzymes, to break down allergens like pet dander and dust mites, as well as ceramic filters embedded with platinum catalysts that neutralize odors.



Key upgrades

WIRELESS CONTROLS

There's no need for a separate wall thermostat with ductless units—you regulate them with a few of eight remotes. Some systems, such as LG's (lg-usa.com), shown above, have Wi-Fi links that put your smartphone in control no matter where you are.

VARIABLE-SPEED COMPRESSOR

Also known as inverter-driven compressors, they coordinate refrigerant flow to precisely meet indoor cooling needs, putting an end to the uncomfortable up-and-down temperature swings of single- or two-speed units. Variable-speed compressors, like those from Trane (trane.com), also use less power and last far longer than their fixed-speed counterparts.

SENSORS A built-in occupancy sensor, like the ones from Panasonic (business.panasonic.com), maximizes energy savings by ramping up the indoor unit when you enter the room and turning it down when you leave.

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No other outdoor cooker can match the quality and versatility of a Big Green Egg—
it truly is The Ultimate Cooking Experience!



WHOLE-HOUSE COOLING

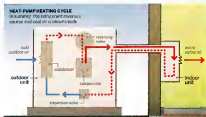
At first, ductless systems were simple, single-room affairs, often installed as replacements for window air conditioners. But now some outdoor units, like the ones made by Carrier (carrier.com), have grown so powerful they can supply refrigerant to as many as nine separate indoor units. Amazingly, each unit is one of these "mini-split" systems, still operates independently. When it comes to customized cooling, this option is hard to top.

30%

Amount of electricity you're likely to save by replacing window AC units with ductless systems. Coincidentally, that's also about how much cooling is typically lost in most air-seal systems, thanks to leaks, poorly installed ductwork.

Heat pumps: the all-season option

Ductless systems can produce both hot and cold air if you get a heat pump for the outdoor unit. Its key component is a reversing valve, which switches the direction of refrigerant flow to suit the season.



HEAT PUMPS MOVE NORTH

These days, heat pump systems made sense only where temps didn't dip below freezing on winter nights. But with recent advancements in compressor technology, units like the one made by Fujitsu (fujitsu-general.com) are able to operate down to -15°F, proving their worth in frigid states from Maine to Minnesota.



Install FAQs

• Who does the work?

Many ductless websites can pinpoint experienced installers in your area, and are a good place to start your search.

• Where should the outdoor unit go?

It will perform best in a shady location—the north side of a house or under a deck—as long as there is enough clearance for airflow and maintenance.

• Where should the indoor units go?

Wall-mounted units are easiest to install when located on an exterior wall near the outdoor unit. It is more challenging to connect the refrigerant lines to units mounted on interior walls, but some models can run as much as 20 feet in length, if not impossible.

• How long does it take?

A system with one wall-mounted unit can be installed in about 4 hours. Each additional unit adds another 2 hours. Ducted and ceiling units are more time-consuming.

REBATES

A few utilities offer rebates for installing ductless AC systems. Many more incentives are available for heat pump systems. To see whether you might be eligible, go to energystar.gov/rebate-finder.

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Tips to Stain Like a Pro

A photograph of a modern outdoor deck with a wooden railing, featuring a large tree and a circular inset showing a close-up of a tree trunk.



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at home outside

It's time to throw open your doors and enjoy life alfresco. We've got 33 upgrade ideas for turning even the simplest patio, porch, or deck into an inviting open-air retreat.

BY AMY HUGHES

shaded getaway

1. LET THE FLOOR SET THE TONE

Peeney pebble concrete—the pebbles are natural materials like landscape designer Kate Wiseman of San Diego Outdoor Designs, in San Diego, California, chose formal, square-cut blue tiles to set off the patio from the wooded driveway. Get this: The square tiles are only about \$5 per square foot, unlimited.

2. DRESS UP WALLS

Patterned blocks transform boring borders. Here, a sitting wall topped with limestone was made with cast-concrete blocks styled after antique brickwork. The blocks are made of concrete fragments at salvage yards, starting at about \$25 per piece.

3. CHOOSE EASY-CARE FURNISHINGS

All-weather metal, wicker, and teak are the go-to. A solid aluminum set, such as this, is easy to maintain and looks like polished steel. The Westport Collection is a four-chairs plus 43-inch round table. \$1,190, kayakoutdoor.com.

4. FENCE FOR PRIVACY

This great fence by Powell Woodworking has slats on top to secure seclusion but preserve the view. A great alternative, such as the Western Red Cedar Chamber Lattice, is available. It does the job for \$99 per 6-by-6 foot panel. homedepot.com.

5. ADD FOCAL POINTS

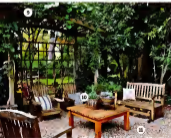
Station decorative accents such as sculptures and fountains. In garden beds beyond the perimeter of a patio, Kate Wiseman chose a small, white, tiered fountain. See her garden tour. Low-Greenery Ltd. \$50. lowgreeneryltd.com, lsgreenery.com, \$225. specialtyfountains.com.

welcoming warmth

6. INCLUDE A HEARTH A cozy fireplace extends the outdoor living season. No budget left a custom built? Try one you can assemble today like the Redwood Colonial Outdoor Fireplace kit, about \$3,000 for a 40-inch-wide by 32-inch-deep by 70-inch-tall unit. woodlanddecor.com

7. POUR A CONCRETE FLOOR Stamped and sealed concrete slabs like this poured concrete pebble-combing used as a stage to meet us. It's a nice way to see the effect of about \$3 to \$22 per square foot. Install it via concretelibrary.com to find a pro near you.

8. KEEP IT COOL Cooling fans pop up moving air over the heated coals. Consider a remote with a light to control the party after the sun goes down. Similar to about \$20 with Hunter Matheson Outdoor Ceiling Fan. \$229. hempstead.com



natural hideaway

9. CREATE A LUSH CANOPY A wood-carved draped with leafy vines offers a dappled shade and some protection from a sudden summer rain shower. Create your own natural backyard retreat at starting with Coral Coast Herb and Wood Garden Arbor, \$200. hempstead.com Then complete it with a few fast-growing golden hops vines, which we like for their cheery yellow flowers. \$5.75 per bare root plant. perennialsupply.com

10. PLANT A TABLETOP GARDEN Clatter bowls of hardy succulents for a stylish, no-fuss centerpiece to enjoy year-round. Get a head start on your centerpiece with the DIY Desk Garden, \$25 for a colorful assortment of 30 bare root plants to arrange in your own pots. etsy.com/shop/woodlanddecor

11. ADD A SAMBROOK-STYLE FLOOR Pine-rod gravel infill makes a stone-appearing surface sink into the soil. Support anything on concrete pavers, such as these, to prevent sinking into the gravel. Suburban pine gravel, about \$4 for a 50-pound bag of stone, pavers from \$2 per piece. hempstead.com



nestled nook

12. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING FEATURES An old stone wall creates a nook. Use for the fireplace path, stone wall, and the wall. The side of your garage or a shed can also offer a nook for a nook. hempstead.com

13. PLANT A ROCK GARDEN A nook enclosure needs a plant backdrop. Try adding foliage to soften the surroundings. With a stone wall, plant the previous small root systems in a shallow pocket. Include colorful blooms that help lighten an otherwise dark area.

14. ADD FLAMES THE EASY WAY A portable fire bowl casts off the chill of a summer evening far too far to use them as a heat source. You can also move it when and where you want. We like the warm glow Green Arrow's real wood fire. Cooper Fire Pit by Good Directions, \$300. wayfair.com

15. CHOOSE A FREE-FORM FLOOR Flagstones in random shapes and sizes fit together like puzzle pieces for an organic look that complements the natural surroundings. Flagstones, about \$4 to \$9 per square foot, at stone yards.

Open Up!



A design-savvy bungalow owner finally gets her free-flowing family space—with a great room that's part great outdoors

By Jennifer Blake Krasner Photographs by Ray Kachadorian Produced by Tisha Leung Styling by Cher Hatch Langes

ABOVE: Gray-brown siding, a bright-red door, and a large tree give the 2003 bungalow a pickled, earthy appeal. OPPOSITE: A wall of sliding glass panels doors opens the bungalow to a crisp, design-pulse for seamless indoor-outdoor living.



For years,

Annette Gutierrez had eyed the large, dark-hued house across the street. A 1988 Craftsman bungalow being used as a rooming house for college students, it had long threatened to explode, a crumbling roof and a severely sagging roofline among its ills. One day, while she was looking out a window of her own neighboring Craftsman, the two-story property's old wooden planks creaked onto the pavement. Which gave Annette an idea.

She and her husband, Gustavo, lived their location in the Hollywood Grove section of Los Angeles, but the bungalow they owned at the time had a master suite flying solo on the second floor, while the other bedrooms, including that of the couple's daughter, Lola, then 7, were downstairs. For a long time, Annette had wanted a traditional bedroom-apartment layout. Plus, there had to be no backyard passageway. The wreck, with its larger second story and a rickety back lift, could solve those problems. Soon after the gate fell, the house went on the market. Annette went head-on into a bidding war, won, and needed all of a day to sell her house in the single-after-hours district. Confident in their decision, the family completed their 150-yard move.

And then five high bidders took a dive. Annette and Gustavo, an IT consultant, soon learned that the house was on the verge of collapse—and it would take them 1.5 years and two phases of remodeling to transform it from fiasco to fantasia.

Annette, the daughter of a contractor and now co-owner of Porcini, a garden shop in the nearby Los Feliz neighborhood, had no fear of an old house in need of hard work. She'd figured they would fix the bowed floorboards and skewed door frames, then reimagine the 2,100-square-foot layout. "The original house wasn't badly damaged," she says. "Just the back of it was a series of old porches that had been enclosed, so it was dark and chopped up." Finally, her plan called for opening up the

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DELTA



TOP and BOTTOM LEFT: Partner Robert Bosté let the original red-down blue and black bedroom floor create a custom-checkered floor. White-washed maple blue and black-green add more soft color, set off by white railings and trim. FIRST (left) and SECOND (right) floors (upper left) and (lower left).

BOTTOM RIGHT: An original built-in vintage piece of glass in the dining room now pairs it with red.



traditional main floor—formal living, family, and dining room—to the cramped rear kitchen and den, so the entire living area would feel like a modern, multifunctional great room. The upstairs, with a master suite and two smaller bedrooms, needed mostly cosmetic fixes. Looking to put her green thumb to work, she got started on planning the fresh 4,600-square-foot backyard right away.

Having drawn up her plans for the ground floor, Annette asked an architect friend, Oscar Morales, to put them on paper. Her aesthetic changes would have to wait. "The house was really close to a teardown," Morales says, citing the inadequate foundation and other structural defects.

Old building permits revealed that the home's back-and-forth concrete foundation wasn't where it should have been. Built with meager railroad ties, the original house had likely had a back porch and at least one upper balcony, both nicely enclosed long ago. "It was never designed to hold two full stories," Annette explains. Then there were the exterior issues. Besides pipes, when a furnace had been installed on the main level, a few key joints had been severed.

the plan

A bump-out built the laundry in the kitchen could grow and open onto a patio in the master suite. The half-bath and a new deck wraps the back porch.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



**"Color inspires me.
I wouldn't want a turquoise
room, but splashes of it
make me happy."**



"Frankly, I thought the house was hopeless," says Jeff Board, the contractor hired for the renovation's first phase. "But I had worked on Annette's previous house—the can turn things into gold." So he agreed to give straightening the structure his best shot.

Using a series of bottle jacks, Board's team raised the original portion of the house by about 4 inches and went to work. The danger at a house this old, he says, is unintentional injury. So his crew replaced the crumbling foundation to meet California's earthquake code, fortifying the new poured concrete with steel ribs and deep footings. Then they repaired the joists and set the house back down, adding a new set of concrete piers for support.

The shoring up was successful, but the aftermath was ugly. As the house straightened, the interior plaster walls buckled and cracked. The foundation could now support a major tremor, but the inside of the home was badly shaken.

All the destruction did yield some finds. Masses of rotted brick, salvaged from the old foundation, were kept to use for garden pathways. Other saves included spars covering floors and most of the doors, many of which had been pinned with multiple dead bolts—once security for madmen, now a cosmetic challenge for the crew. "We cut plugs from one door, plugged them into the holes, and bleached them in with wood putty and lots of sanding," Annette says.

The rose-concrete door project took a toll on the budget, however. Heaving into the door smooth reds, Annette says, she spent a day sobbing in an upstairs bathroom. She had a rough wall, reasonably level floors, and a new roof over her head. The crew had rattled ductless HVAC against and down. She ended a renovation in tears.

The break lasted eight years, save for her continuing work in the garden.

By the time Annette was ready to press on with reimagining the house, things looked different in the Gentry household. Gentry's two older kids, who had often visited in earlier years, were out on their own, and the couple's daughter, Lola, was now 18 and

LEFT: The original wood floor cupboards were saved, but those closest to the new fireplace wall.
PAINT (living room): Martha Stewart's Squash Blossom Turquoise (painted). **Antiques:** Agatha

BOTTOM RIGHT: A salvaged jade-green pedestal sink was the inspiration for the newly designed master bath, which also features one of the couple's LVT bathroom floors



ABOVE: Annette's favorite place to unwind after a long day's the master bedroom deck, which affords a welcome view of the famed HOLLYWOOD sign.
PAINT (bedroom): Benjamin Moore's Copper Gray

bending to college. Instead of reconfiguring the whole ground floor, which Annette had planned, demolished, and ended up quite pleased with, she decided to leave it and focus on remodeling the house's chopped-up back side. Her priority: the kitchen.

She'd already decided to combine it with the adjacent breakfast nook and laundry room. But a soon occurred to her that she could do even better. She would create her long-wanted great room and cleverly link the house's exterior to the inside by literally opening the kitchen—cutting out its back wall and making a living space that spilled into the back yard. "I'd seen modern houses with a great indoor-outdoor kitchen," she says, "and I wanted that."

Ready for phase two, the homeowners demolished the old kitchen and ripped the breakfast area and laundry room down to the dirt. Enslaving out